

No
CENTRAL MUSEUM, LAHORE.

THE
BUDDHĀ STORY
IN
STONE

AN INTERPRETATION
OF
THIRTY-FOUR GRAECO-BUDDHIST SCULPTURES
IN THE LAHORE MUSEUM

By
H. HARGREAVES.



Third Impression.

CALCUTTA :

PRINTED AT THE BAPTIST MISSION PRESS.

1924.

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THE BUDDHĀ STORY IN STONE

By

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Frontier Circle.*

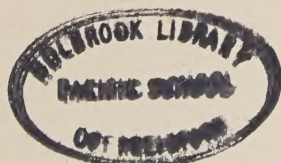


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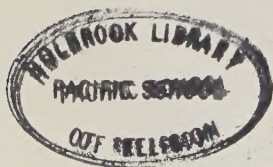
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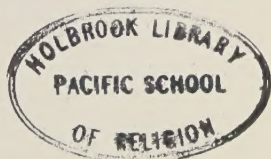


PREFACE.

THE Buddha Story in Stone was one of a series of lectures delivered at the Central Museum, Lahore, during the cold weather of 1913-14. It is now issued in permanent form in the hope that it may prove a popular guide and introduction to the collection of Græco-Buddhist sculptures which form the greater portion of the archæological section of that museum.

To the student of Buddhist art in India the Lahore sculptures need no introduction, for the works of M. A. Foucher, Professor A. Grünwedel and Dr. J. Burgess have been largely devoted to their publication and elucidation, while to an even wider circle they are no less familiar from the delightful pages of Rudyard Kipling's novel *Kim*.

No new theories or assertions of having made any discoveries regarding the reliefs are here advanced and controversial matters, such as the date of the sculptures and the identification of particular personages, have been avoided or referred to in footnotes only. In the Bibliography will be found the sources of all the subject matter of the lecture, and the only claim put forward is that of making accessible to the casual visitor information scattered through many books, some of which are in a language not so familiar as English and are not usually to be found in Indian libraries.



In particular I would acknowledge my indebtedness to M. A. Foucher whose *L'art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhāra* still remains the most complete and accurate interpretation of these reliefs, and to Dr. D. B. Spooner to whose *Handbook to the Sculptures in the Peshawar Museum* I have made frequent recourse. To complete the circle of my acknowledgment let me add that the title of the lecture was suggested by peasant visitors to the museum who, with the unerring accuracy of the simple, designate these reliefs *ṣatthar kī taṣwīrēn*, stone pictures.

H. HARGREAVES.

Lahore, April 14th, 1914.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

The reception accorded to this little publication has been unexpectedly favourable, and not only has a third edition been necessary but there has been a wide-spread demand for a vernacular edition also. This demand has been met by the issue of an Urdu translation of the text under the title of *Budh kī kahānī, ṣatthron kī zabānī*. The translation was undertaken by Maulvi Nur Bakhsh, M.A., Professor, Government College, Lahore, to whom I am indebted for a very able rendering of the text and for giving to this lecture a greatly extended usefulness.

Since the issue of the first edition in 1914 archæological research has made many advances towards a fuller interpretation of these reliefs. For Vajrapāṇi (p. 20), the amorous couple of Fig. XVIII, and the seated monk of Fig. XXXII plausible identifications have now been proposed, and there is more general agreement as to the probable date of the sculptures. These points being, however, of greater archæological than general interest, it has been thought unnecessary to refer to them in footnotes or embody them in the text, lest under a burden of technical details this publication should lose its distinctive character of a simple and popular guide for the general visitor to the Lahore Museum.

H. HARGREAVES.

Peshawar, December, 1923.



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The Buddha Story in Stone.

INTRODUCTION.

During the six months it was my privilege to work in the galleries of the Lahore Museum I overheard, all unseen, many strange designations applied to those sculptures which are at once the pride of the Punjab and the envy of European collectors. Some, not a little scornful, denominated them 'a lot of old stones,' and yet I venture to-night, without apology, to direct your attention to some of these same old stones for, if we are ready to believe with Pope that 'the proper study of mankind is man,' then man's handiwork as the outward expression of his mental activities and artistic longings is surely worthy of our consideration.

Moreover, the very fact that these sculptures are old increases their claim to our appreciation and makes a further appeal to that obscure, but very real interest which the love of the past has for most of us, an appeal not only to our curiosity but also to our intellect and even our affections.

On the artistic merit of these sculptures or the technical skill of their unknown artists I may not dwell to-night, but must limit myself to a consideration of their significance in the illustration of Buddhist belief and practice in the early days of our era when Buddhism flourished on the North-West Frontier of India.

These sculptures, sometimes designated Gandhāra sculptures but more correctly, perhaps, Græco-Buddhist, emanate almost without exception from what is, to-day, the district of Peshawar, a region whose ancient name was Gandhāra, a name familiar to many of my audience as the birthplace of the princess Gāndhārī, the mother of the Kauravas. We know from the records of pious

pilgrims that as late as the 7th century Buddhism still lingered in this region, but the reliefs in question undoubtedly belong to a considerably earlier period though their exact date still remains undetermined.

Religious piety has in all ages impelled its votaries to dedicate to shrines and temples memorials of all kinds likely to advance their own religious merit or strengthen the faith of others. That which in Europe appeared as frescoes and sculptures probably took in Gandhāra similar forms of which, however, only the more durable, that is the bas-reliefs, these pictures in stone, now remain.

It is improbable that in this audience there is a single Buddhist, yet I believe that to every thoughtful mind there must be, even in an alien religion, something appealing very strongly to our wider sympathies when we realize what that religion meant to its earnest professors, how in the strength of its tenets they bore with fortitude the burden of life, and, upheld by its hopes, faced with equanimity even death itself. If, therefore, some of the legends related to-night may seem very trivial and their representation somewhat naive, it must be remembered that they were very real to those for whom they were created, and that these sculptures, when adorning in their pristine splendour their original monuments, may have proved no less edifying than the altar pieces and stained glass of our European cathedrals.

In a lecture of one hour's duration it is impossible even to touch on the philosophic side of Buddhism, and I shall confine my attention to legends dealing with the life of the historic Buddha, that is, Śākya Muni, Gautama, for, need I remind you, that the Buddha of my story is only one of many past and coming Buddhas.

The exact date of the Buddha's death is still the subject of controversy, but 482 B.C. is probably a close approximation. How, after a long series of previous births, he was finally born as Prince Siddhārtha, the son of Śuddhodana, the ruler of the Śākya, and after his marriage lived happily with his wife Yaśodhara until his eyes were opened to the inevitability of age, sickness and death, is known to most, as is also his flight from

the closely guarded palace, his abandonment of family and throne and his endeavour to find some way of salvation in a life of abstinence and rigid mortification of the flesh. His years of asceticism, his attainment of enlightenment, *bodhi*, under the *pīpal* tree at Bodh Gaya are no less renowned events in that long career of strenuous endeavour and gentle saintliness which from the first turning of the wheel of the law in the Deer Park near Benares until his *parinirvāṇa* at the age of eighty at the obscure hamlet of Kusinagara (Kusinārā), captivated the hearts of thousands.

On the success of his teachings, and the millions who have professed themselves his followers I must not now dwell, but will, without further preface, turn to those ancient pictures in stone which illustrate his story.

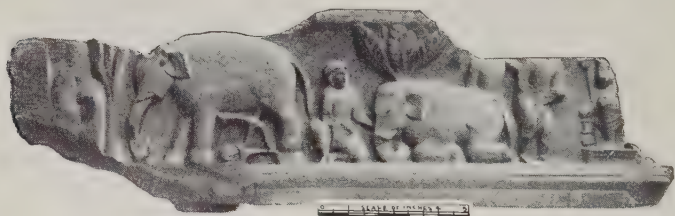
I.—CHAD-DANTA JĀTAKA.

It is not easy to become a Buddha, the texts tell us ; indeed, such a position is to be attained only after a long series of existences and the display of the most heroic virtues, and from such a probation even Śākya Muni himself was not exempt. The stories of his previous lives as given in the Buddhist Birth Stories, *Jātaka*, enumerate some 550 incarnations as bird, beast and human being, and our first relief represents the Bodhisattva¹ as a marvellous (six-tusked) elephant in which condition he realized the perfection of generosity.

We are told that the noble beast once shaking a forest tree all unintentionally caused flowers, pollen and tender shoots to fall on one of his wives, while the wind scattered on the other only dead leaves, dried twigs and red ants. In her jealous fury the latter starved herself

¹ A Bodhisattva (one whose quality is *bodhi*, knowledge) is a being destined to become a Buddha. Until the final birth, however, a Bodhisattva is a being in whom true knowledge is latent but not fully developed. Thus Gautama, until he obtained perfect knowledge under the *bodhi* tree at Gaya, is, properly speaking, the Bodhisattva and the only historic one. Later Buddhism has evolved the theory of countless others of whom Maitreya, the coming Buddha, Avalokiteśvara and Mañjuśrī are the most celebrated.

to death forming the desire to be reborn a beautiful female and become the queen of Benares. Hardly had her double wish been fulfilled than she entrusted the accomplishment of her vengeance to the cleverest huntsman in the district. Hidden at the bottom of a pit the latter discharges a poisoned arrow into the unfortunate creature—an incident clearly indicated in the relief. The next act of the tragedy depicts the magnanimous



I.—Chad-danta Jātaka. No. 1156.

beast crouching submissively at the feet of his enemy to allow him to cut off his magnificent tusks by means of a saw, here unfortunately missing.

On the extreme right is the huntsman bringing the tusks to the seated queen who, according to one account, no sooner sees them than a sudden awakening of conscience causes her to die of a broken heart.

II.—THE DĪPAÑKARA JĀTAKA.

Our second sculpture likewise depicts an event in one of the many previous existences of the Buddha. From the frequency with which it is represented in Græco-Buddhist art it would appear to have been a favourite subject for the chisel of the artist and that probably because Nagarhāra, its locale, was the neighbouring kingdom to Gandhāra.

The Buddha figure shown in the relief is not, therefore, the historical Buddha of our story but the earliest of his twenty-four predecessors, a Buddha named Dīpaṅkara. Once when this Buddha Dīpaṅkara was about to

visit a certain town, news of his coming reached a young ascetic named Megha or Sumati. This pious youth, anxious to pay his respects to the great Teacher, and having just won a certain sum of money by his display of Vedic knowledge, hastened to the town to purchase some flowers to cast in worship before Dīpaṅkara. Now it so happened that the king of the country himself anxious to pay homage to the Buddha had ordered that all the flowers available should be reserved for himself. The young ascetic thus found himself in difficulties. At



II.—Dipaṅkara Jātaka. Sikri Stupa, 2.

last, however, he chanced to meet a maiden carrying a water jar who had been so fortunate as to obtain seven lotuses. Five of these the young man purchased from her, on condition that in all future births she should be his wife. The purchase of these flowers from the maiden is the first act of the drama represented by the sculpture, wherein the youth and the maiden are seen standing to one side bargaining. Having completed this purchase, the youth turns and prepares to cast the flowers before the Buddha, who has meanwhile arrived

on the scene. But the flowers, when thrown, do not fall to the ground but remain suspended about the Buddha's head, as is plainly shown in the sculpture. Impressed by this miracle the youth prostrates himself in adoration, at the same time letting down his long hair and spreading it as a carpet before the feet of the Buddha. Touched by this act of devotion, Dīpaṅkara Buddha then addresses the young man and prophesies that in due time he will himself attain to enlightenment and become a Buddha. By a further manifestation of miraculous power, the youth is then mysteriously raised up into the air, where he again kneels and continues his adoration of Dīpaṅkara.

In the sculpture all these various acts are represented, being grouped together into one composition. The young ascetic, it should be remembered, was destined later to become the Gautama Buddha of history, while in the maiden, Buddhists see Yaśodhara, Siddhārtha's youthful bride, whom he abandoned in the Great Renunciation.

III.—THE BODHISATTVA IN THE TUSHITA HEAVEN.

After his penultimate birth as Viśvantara when he realized the perfection of charity, the Bodhisattva was born as Śvētakētu, a *deva* of the Tushita heaven, and it is there that we see him seated on a lotus throne in our third relief. As to his character of Bodhisattva there is no doubt, for his turban and jewels show that he is only a potential Buddha but his monastic robe warns us that he is on the way to becoming the perfect Buddha. The position of his hands indicates meditation and the question arises, "On what does he meditate?" The texts informs us, "Now in truth the Bodhisattva sitting in the paradise of the Tushitas made the four great preliminary examinations." What are these four? They are the examination of the time, continent, country and family in which he would be born for the last time. "And having thus examined he remained silent."

How he decides these questions we shall see anon, for



III.—The Bodhisattva in the Tushita Heaven. Sikri Stupa, 8.

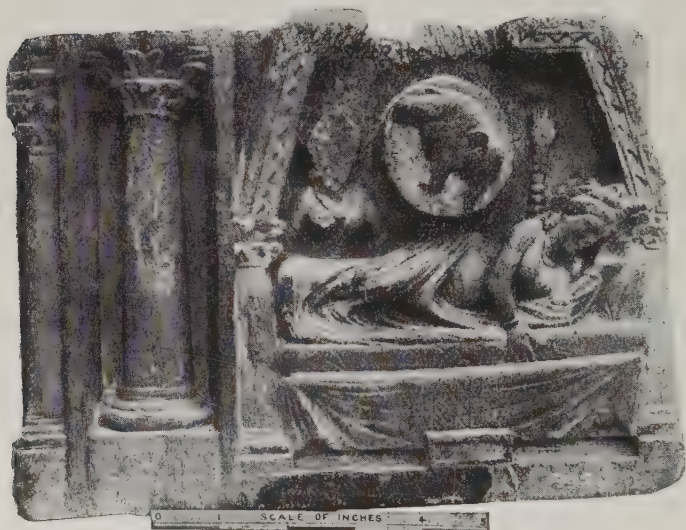
we shall find him presently on the earth where with greater ease we may follow him step by step.

IV.—QUEEN MĀYĀ'S DREAM.

Our fourth relief shows the results of that fourfold examination, for having seen that the present was the propitious time the Bodhisattva decides to be born in the continent of Jambudvīpa (India), in the country of Magadha (Behar) and of Māya, the queen of Śuddhodhana, the head of the Śakyas. Māyā herself is forewarned of this event by a marvellous dream in which there appears to descend a white six-tusked elephant which enters her right side. In the sculpture the elephant, the divine character of which is indicated by the halo surrounding it, is depicted in the act of descending from the Tushita heaven. Near the feet of the sleeping queen stands a female guard and close to her head is a lampstand. The figure of Māyā is very successfully

treated, her realistic and natural pose contrasting very favourably with the stiffly represented figure of the dying Buddha in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* scene, No. XXXII.

Such a wonderful vision naturally called for explanation and the palace *brahmins* predicted that there would be born to the queen a son bearing the thirty-two marks



IV.—Queen Māyā's Dream No 2335.

of a "great man." "If he stays at home," they said, "he will become a universal monarch, but if he shaves his hair and beard, and putting on an orange-coloured robe leaves his home and renounces the world, he will become a perfectly enlightened Buddha."

V.—THE BIRTH OF THE BUDDHA. THE SEVEN STEPS.

The representation of the birth of Prince Siddhārtha is very naturally one of the commonest of all subjects in Buddhist art. The queen on the way to her father's house had reached the Lumbinī garden which, according

to the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hian, lay "50 *li* (some 10 miles) to the east" of Kapilavastu, when the wonderful child was not less wonderfully born. The sculpture shows the queen standing in the centre of the composition, her right hand upraised grasping the bough of a *sal* tree, her left arm resting on her sister Mahāprajāpati, behind whom stand two attendants. Meanwhile the child is shown issuing from the right side of the queen in harmony with the legend of the dream, while the god Indra with outstretched arms receives him on a golden



V.—Birth of the Buddha : The Seven Steps. No. 1353.

cloth. Behind Indra stands Brahma waving in the air his scarf-like upper garment.

In the foreground the child standing on the ground is in the act of taking the seven steps in the direction of each of the cardinal points. According to a Tibetan text advancing to the east he said—"I will reach the highest *nirvāṇa*," to the south—"I will be the first of all creatures," to the west—"This will be my last birth," to the north—"I will cross the ocean of existence."

VI.—THE BATH AND RETURN FROM THE LUMBINĪ GARDEN.

The right lower panel of this frieze shows another famous event in the cycle of the nativity, namely the bath of the infant Bodhisattva who is shown standing on a small stool and supported by two kneeling attendants while the gods Indra and Brahma to the right and left, respectively, pour over him water from small water-pots held in the right hand, just as Indian children are bathed to-day. It will be noticed that the artist omits



VI.—The Bath. The return to Kapilavastu. No. 1347.

neither the nimbus—the sign of the infant's divine rank, nor the parasol—the indication of his royal birth.

The left panel represents the return of the mother and the child from the Lumbinī garden to the royal capital. You may perhaps ask, "Where are the mother and child?" in which case I can only remind you that closed litters are even yet not unknown in India, and it requires but a little goodwill to believe that the one borne on the shoulders of four men, of which only two are shown in the relief, conceals the royal mother and infant whose safe custody and dignity demand a mounted escort.

VII.—THE BIRTH OF CHANDAKA AND KANṬHAKA.

Our next relief finds us in more humble company, for here we are in the stables of the royal palace. For the explanation let us refer to the *Mahāvastu* which tells us: "At the time when the Bodhisattva was born, were born five hundred princes of the Śakyas, Sundara-Nanda foremost; five hundred maidens, Yaśodhara foremost; five hundred servants, Chandaka foremost; five hundred



VII.—Birth of Chandaka and Kanṭhaka. No. 1966.

horses, Kanṭhaka foremost." Here in the stable, over the wall of which peer a number of horses, we see the father of Chandaka feeding the mare with the little white foal, while the mother of Chandaka, seated most astonishingly in European fashion, nurses the infant *sais*. But we need not now linger over these two faithful friends of the Buddha, for we shall meet them again in reliefs Nos. 13, 14, 15.

VIII.—THE VISIT OF THE RISHI ASITA.

The scene of this event is the palace of King Siddhodhana and the time immediately after the return

from the Lumbinī garden. We see the aged *rishi* Asita nursing the infant prince, having received him from the hands of the nurse. Behind the sage stands his nephew Naradatta who afterwards became a follower of the Buddha. The prophecy of the *rishi*, more precise than that of the Brahmins who interpreted the dream, was



VIII —The visit of the *rishi* Asita. No. 101.

to the effect that the prince would become the perfect Buddha, a prediction but little pleasing to the royal father and not without grief to the *rishi* himself, who recognized with sorrow that his own death would occur before that perfection was attained.

IX.—THE BODHISATTVA AT SCHOOL.

In this fragment we see the Bodhisattva at school seated under a tree, his *takhti* on his knees, his youthful companions to his left. Needless to say the young Siddhartha gives evidence of his miraculous powers by enumerating and demonstrating his knowledge of more systems of writing than were known even to his learned master Viśvamitra. The particular interest of the sculpture in question lies in the fact that on the “slate”

are inscribed a number of Kharosthi characters which M. l'Abbé Boyer¹ has read as equivalent to *ātmaṇa-*



IX.—The Bodhisattva at School. No. 206.

hitam—"the welfare of himself and others," an early foreshadowing of his life's work.

X.—THE FIRST MEDITATION OF THE BODHISATTVA.

In this relief we have a representation of the first meditation of the Bodhisattva and for its elucidation let us turn to the texts. They tell us that on a certain day the prince was taken by his father to see a ploughing match, where in the enclosed space the half-stripped men

¹ Cf. Boyer. *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, Vol. IV (1904), pp. 685 ff.

and the straining oxen were labouring strenuously before the assembled crowd. Now, as the sun increased in strength, the sweat ran down both men and oxen, and for a few moments they ceased from their labours. In the meantime various insects came forth from the ground and flocks of birds descended in multitudes and devoured them. Seeing the tired oxen, their necks bleeding from the yoke and the men toiling beneath the midday sun and the birds devouring the helpless insects, the heart of the Bodhisattva was filled with grief, and retiring from the enclosure and finding a secluded place near a *jambu* tree he dismissed his attendants and sat down beneath its shady branches and through the love and pity



X.—First meditation of the Bodhisattva. Sikri Stupa, 10.

produced by his reflections was wrapt in a state of unconscious ecstasy.

Later, when the king missing his son sent men to search for him, the prince was found still lost in meditation, the shadow of the tree still shading him, though the shadow of the other trees had failed not to move with the ascending sun. The king summoned to the

spot, beholding this sight, was filled with awe and bowed down at the feet of his son, and it is his figure which we see at the lower right corner of the relief. The four adoring figures in princely robes in the upper field are *devas*, such as form the constant but usually invisible attendants of the Buddha.

XI.—THE KILLING, DRAGGING AND HURLING OF THE ELEPHANT.

As was not unusual in ancient India, the prince Siddhārtha established his claim to the hand of his bride Yaśodhara by his skill in arts and athletic games. His father, naturally overjoyed at his son's splendid victory in these contests, ordered that the great elephant of state should be sent to bring the young prince back



XI.—The killing, dragging and hurling of the elephant. No. 2038.

from the field. But this aroused the jealousy of the future Buddha's wicked cousin, Devadatta, who felled the elephant with a single blow as it was issuing from the city gate. The story then goes that Nanda, a half-brother of Siddhārtha, seeing the huge carcass lying before the gate and blocking it, dragged it a little aside, that traffic might not be obstructed by it. Later, when the Bodhisattva himself arrived on the scene, he picked up the huge creature with one hand and hurled it over

the seven walls and moats of the city, in order that the decomposing mass might not infect the town. I may mention that when Hiuan-tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim, visited Kapilavastu about the middle of the 7th century A.D., he was shown the "deep and wide ditch" called the "fallen elephant ditch," which was supposed to have been formed by the fall of this enormous creature.

XII.—LIFE IN THE PALACE: THE SLEEP OF THE WOMEN.

The upper panel of this relief shows us the prince in his palace reclining on his couch, his queen Yaśodhara seated at his feet, an attendant fanning him. Around are the numerous female musicians and dancing girls with whom the king had surrounded him in the vain hope of attracting him to worldly things.

The lower panel represents how awakening one night the prince beheld the ladies of the palace in all the repellent abandon of satiated sleep and, his heart filled with loathing, he arose from his couch and summoning his attendant Chandaka decided to flee and endeavour to find in a life of asceticism the way of freedom from desire.

It is Chandaka who approaches from the left and to whom the prince gives orders for the saddling of his faithful steed. In the alcoves outside the room are the armed female guards, who in this relief seem to have resisted in some miraculous way the heavy sleep with which the gods had afflicted the guardians in order to render possible the prince's flight from the closely-guarded palace.

The figures in the balcony, a bull between two haloed deities, the sun and moon, are of particular interest, probably representing an astronomical position of the Constellation of the Bull, but it has been pointed out that this conjunction would better represent the traditional date of the birth than that of the Great Renunciation.¹

¹ Cf. Grünwedel, Burgess, *Buddhist Art in India*, pp. 130 ff. London, 1901.



XII.—Life in the palace : The sleep of the women. No. 567.

XIII.—CHANDAKA AND KAṆṬHAKA.

This fragment shows us Chandaka and the horse Kaṇṭhaka. It would best suit the continuity of our story if we could recognize in this scene the execution of that order just given by the prince and label it,



XIII —Chandaka and Kaṇṭhaka. No. 116.

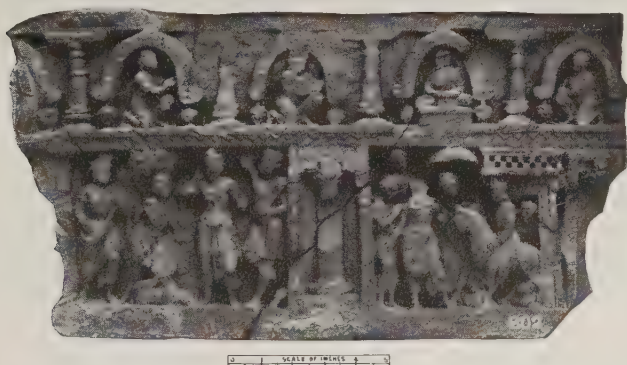
“The Great Renunciation, Chandaka leading out the horse Kaṇṭhaka,”¹ but an examination of the sculpture

¹ Cf. Smith, *A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon*, fig. 74, where this relief is so designated.

and comparison with other representations of this scene suggests that our sculpture may equally well refer to some other event and most probably the return of the groom and horse after the flight of the Bodhisattva when the neighing of the horse raised, momentarily, in the hearts of the citizens, the hope that the prince had returned.

XIV.—THE FLIGHT FROM KAPILAVASTU : CHANGING GARMENTS WITH THE HUNTSMAN.

(a) In the panel to the right we see the Bodhisattva riding forth through the strongly guarded city gate which is miraculously opened by the gods. That no noise of hoofs may alarm the guards the horse's feet are upheld by *yakshas*, godlings or gnomes. By the



XIV.—Flight from Kapilavastu : Changing garments with the huntsman. No. 802.

side of the horse stands Chandaka still holding aloft the umbrella of state, here merely a sign of dignity for, of course, it is in the stillness of night that the Bodhisattva flees from the city. Before the horse stands the Evil Spirit, Māra, who urges the Bodhisattva to abandon his intention, offering him, like Satan in the Christian story, the sovereignty of the world as a reward for acquiescence.

(b) The second panel shows us the prince divested of his ornaments and jewels and about to exchange his princely robes, so unsuitable for an ascetic, for the ruddy garments of a huntsman at whose feet lies a dead antelope. Behind the Bodhisattva stands Vajrapāṇi¹, while the other figure on the left may be Chandaka holding in the folds of his upper garment the royal jewels which he is bidden carry back to the palace.

XV.—THE FAREWELL OF KAṆṬHAKA.

For the last time we here meet the faithful groom and horse at the moment of bidding farewell to the



XV.—The farewell of Kaṇṭhaka. No. 2340.

Bodhisattva. According to the *Buddacharita* the grief-

¹ On the reliefs depicting events subsequent to the flight from the palace will be found an almost constant attendant of the Buddha. This figure, whether represented as Silenus, Eros, Zeus, Hercules, or beardless and stunted, bears invariably the same attribute, a *vajra* or thunderbolt. This variety of form has given rise to much speculation and the figure has been variously identified as Devadatta (cf. XXV), Śakra (Indra), Māra and even as a personification of the *dharma* (law). Cf. Grünwedel, Burgess. *Buddhist Art in India*, pp. 87 ff., Foucher. *Les bas-reliefs du Sikri*, pp. 59 ff., Vogel. *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême Orient*, Vol. 9, pp. 15 ff. Throughout the lecture the figure is denominated *Vajrapāṇi*—the bearer of the thunderbolt—which, while describing its most notable characteristic, leaves open the question of identity.

stricken animal "licks with his tongue his master's feet, watering them with his burning tears," while the sorrowing groom stands by receiving from his master the princely turban and jewels which he carries in both hands without relaxing his hold on the royal umbrella.

XVI.—THE AUSTERITIES OF THE BODHISATTVA.

After six years of exertion the Bodhisattva resolved to practise the most profound meditation and to perform the most rigid penance, and carried this to such an excess that he was reduced almost to a skeleton. The seated image from Sikri, No. 2099, depicts the result of that asceticism, and though the scientist might reasonably question the anatomical accuracy of the figure, it must be admitted that the sculptor has succeeded admirably in depicting the gruesome results of prolonged abstinence.

The sculpture is remarkable in other ways, for though it represents the Bodhisattva (for the enlightenment has yet to be) the figure is that of the perfect Buddha. Nevertheless the upper garment slipping over the wasted arms leaves bare the upper part of the body—an unusual feature in Buddha figures and indeed, save in the rare representations of the austerities of the Master where the exigencies of realism necessitate nudity, entirely contrary to Buddhist practice and feeling. No less exceptional is the untrimmed beard.

The only other statue of this kind at present known is No. 799 of the Peshawar Museum though representations of the ascetic Gautama are occasionally found on bas-reliefs as in the centre panel of No. XVII *infra*.



XVI.—The austerities of the Bodhisattva. No. 2099.

XVII.—THE APPROACH TO THE BODHI
TREE.

Finding that all his austerities failed to advance his enlightenment the Bodhisattva resumed a more natural form of living, upon which five ascetics who had attached themselves to him left him in disappointment.

In the uppermost panel, I believe we may recognize an event which followed this momentous change, namely the offering of the rice-milk to the Bodhisattva by Sujātā, the daughter of the *senāpati*, village lord, of Uruvilva. The relief is unfortunately damaged but the fragmentary female figures are probably those of Sujātā and her servant Puṇṇā, and the golden bowl is seen clearly in the left hand of the Bodhisattva. It will be remarked that the signs of asceticism so clear in the middle panel have entirely disappeared, but this is in perfect agreement with the texts which inform



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SCALE OF INCHES

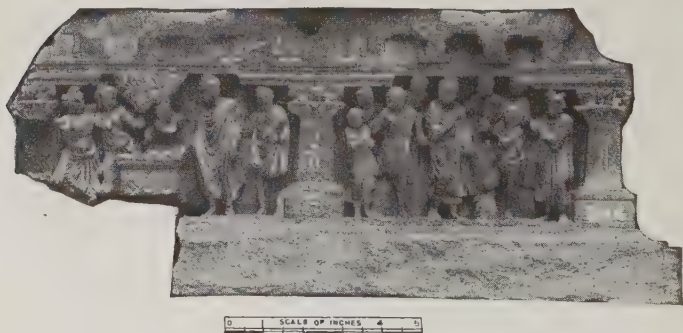
XVII.—The approach to the Bodhi Tree. No. 87.

us that after the Bodhisattva broke his fast his original beauty was instantaneously restored.

The lowest panel shows us the Bodhisattva already, however, in outward appearance the perfect Buddha, advancing to the Bodhi tree followed by *devas* and Vajrapāṇi. Under the very clearly depicted *pīpal* tree is seen the adoring figure of the "tree goddess," while a similar figure half emerging from a fringe of leaves supports with upraised arms the throne itself. In this latter we can recognize the Earth Goddess to whom the Bodhisattva but little later appeals as a witness to his former goodly deeds. But what is the curious but now damaged object which the Bodhisattva holds in his hands? Our next relief will make all clear.

XVIII.—APPROACH TO THE BODHI TREE: THE OFFERING OF THE GRASS.

After accepting the offering of Sujātā the Bodhisattva bathed and crossing the river Nairāñjanā turned his steps towards the Bodhi tree. On his way he meets a grass-cutter with the auspicious name of Svastika, who



XVIII.—The offering of the grass: Approach to the Bodhi Tree.
No. 384.

presents to him a bundle of soft, fresh, pure, green grass, and it is this which the Bodhisattva holds in his hands in the last relief and which in the second panel of this

sculpture he strews on the Bodhi seat. I need not again identify the figure rising *à mi-corps* from beneath the tree. As for the amorous couple to the left, an entirely satisfactory identification has yet to be advanced.¹

XIX.—MĀRA'S ATTACK: THE ENLIGHTENMENT.

The attainment of Supreme Enlightenment is obviously a psychological experience of which sculptural representations are almost impossible. Nevertheless an event



XIX.—Mara's attack (The Enlightenment). No. 1281.

of such importance to the Buddhist world necessitated some kind of commemoration and sculptural representa-

¹ Cf. Spooner. *Excavations at Takht-i-Bāhi*, A.S.I., 1907-8, p. 141.

tions of it were imperatively demanded. The sculptors had, therefore, recourse to incidents closely connected with this event and found in the temptation of the Bodhisattva by the Evil Spirit, Māra, something which would impress upon the faithful both the terrible nature of such an attack and the corresponding magnitude of the ensuing victory.

Māra, fearful lest the Bodhisattva should accomplish his aim and open up the path of salvation for others, approached him trying to persuade him to abandon his quest, tempting him with both the lusts of power and pleasure. Finding all his attempts useless he endeavoured by furious and demoniacal assaults to dislodge him from his seat, challenging his right thereto. The Bodhisattva, however, called upon the Earth to bear witness to his right by virtue of his acts in previous existences. To this appeal which is signified by the "earth-touching attitude," *bhūmi sparśa mudrā*, the earth responds and Māra defeated flees in dismay.

In our relief we see in the upper right one of his attacking army, a grotesque ventral-faced demon, while the spear of another is visible to the left of the *pīpal* tree. Māra is represented twice, to the right returning his sword to its scabbard, for the Bodhisattva has not appealed to the Earth in vain, and to the left divested of his useless weapon seemingly making a last appeal. The attendant by Māra's side is probably his good son Shreshti, who endeavours on all occasions to dissuade his father from attacking the Bodhisattva.

XX.—MARA'S ATTACK.

Some idea of the demon assailants of the Bodhisattva is furnished by this fragment from the left edge of a representation of Māra's attack. Of this portion of his terrible host the three lowest figures are warriors pure and simple, but those above are almost literal representations of the demons enumerated in the Chinese Sanskrit text which describes them as, "Some with three heads on one body, others with eyes protruding from their



XX.—Māra's attack. No. 538.

heads, some with teeth like swords and tongues like spears. Then they advanced belching forth fire and flame, with barbed and fiery tongues and sharpened teeth."

It must be confessed that the bas-relief deals with the subject so realistically that it may well give rise to the supposition that in some cases the texts may have been directly inspired by the sculptures.

XXI.—THE OFFERING OF THE FOUR BOWLS.

Some time after the enlightenment which followed the defeat of Māra, the

Buddha, for so we may now truly designate him, arose from the Bodhi seat and betaking himself to a neighbouring grove fell into an ecstatic trance which lasted for seven weeks. At the end of this period the four Lokapālas, the Guardians of the Four Quarters, realizing that he had no begging bowl in which to receive the food which the gods were contriving for him, approached him, each offering a golden bowl. These on account of

their unsuitability for an ascetic the Buddha could not accept, upon which the Lokapālas offered a series of bowls of less and less valuable materials which were all refused until they presented four bowls of bean-coloured stone. Putting the four bowls one in the other the Buddha straightway moulded them into one by his miraculous power.

It is of interest to note that the Begging Bowl of the Buddha was reputed to have been preserved at the



XXI.—The offering of the four bowls. Sikri Stupa, 13.

Pātra-chaitya or Hall of the Bowl, "inside the royal city, towards the north-east" of the city of Peshawar. Fa-Hien in the beginning of the 5th century found this religious foundation served by nearly seven hundred monks, but when Hiuan-tsang visited Gandhāra in the 7th century the sanctuary was ruined and deserted and the bowl after many vicissitudes was said to have gone to Persia.

XXII.—THE FIRST SERMON.

The time had now come for the Buddha to enter on his ministry. Mention has already been made of the five disciples who had attached themselves to him during his asceticism, and who deserted him in disgust when he abandoned his austerities and struck out a path for



XXII.—The first sermon. No. 143.

himself. These, on leaving him, had gone to the famous Mrigadāva or Deer-Park at Sarnath near Benares. The Buddha, therefore, having decided to address himself first to them, proceeded to Benares, and it was here in the Deer Park that he preached the first Sermon, or for the first time "Turned the Wheel of the Law," as the event is denominated by Buddhists.

It is interesting to note that the Sanskrit expression for this act, *dharmachakra-pravartana*, "the setting in motion the wheel of the law," is here represented literally, and the Buddha is seen turning an actual wheel which rests upon a trident or *triśula* which is itself symbolical of the three Jewels of Buddhism, namely the Buddha, the Doctrine, *dharmā*, and the Community of Monks, *saṅgha*. The reclining deer at the foot of the throne defines the locale, the Deer Park, *mṛigadāva*, the present Sarnath near Benares..

The success of the Buddha's preaching is seen in the five monks, the converted five disciples mentioned above.

XXIII.—KAŚYAPA OF URUVILVA.

Kaśyapa of Uruvilva was the eldest of three brothers, all famous ascetics, who dwelt with a vast multitude of disciples on the bank of a river near the place where the



XXIII.—Kaśyapa of Uruvilva. No. 464.

Buddha had himself practised austerities. Having begun his ministry at Benares he not long afterwards

betook himself to Kaśyapa's hermitage, intending to convert him, and with him all his followers. To do this the Buddha was obliged to have recourse to some five hundred miracles. One of these was the victory over a serpent. In one corner of the hermitage was a fire temple in which dwelt a particularly venomous serpent. The Brahmans, terrified of this monster, had abandoned the temple altogether and no one dared to approach it. To impress them with his power, the Buddha craved permission to occupy this building. Kaśyapa at first refused, thinking that he would certainly lose his life, but he yielded finally to the Buddha, though he warned him that it meant certain death. The Buddha, however, calmly entered the place and took his seat. As soon as the Buddha had seated himself, his body began to emit so dazzling an effulgence that the terrible serpent was over-awed, and, laying aside his anger, crept meekly into the Buddha's begging bowl. The Brahmans, meanwhile seeing the extraordinary light issuing from the temple, concluded that the place was on fire, and hastened thither with jars of water to extinguish the supposed conflagration, as is clearly depicted in the relief. In the end the Buddha's efforts were crowned with success, and the three brothers and their disciples joined the newly founded church.

XXIV.—DESCENT FROM THE TRAYAS- TRIMŚAS HEAVEN.

According to some of the texts Queen Māyā lived but a short time after the birth of her son and was reborn as a *deva* in the "Heaven of the thirty-three gods," and one of the acts of the Buddha was to visit that paradise and preach his doctrine to her and the other *devas*. We have in the Lahore Museum (Sikri Stupa No. V) a representation of that scene, but our relief deals with the Buddha's return to earth. We see him descending on a ladder of precious substances, golden and silver ladders forming the stairways of the attendant gods Indra and Brahma. The kneeling figure at

the foot of the ladder is in reality, despite its seeming masculinity, a nun, the *bhikṣhunī* Utpalavarṇā who, by faith, was able to assume the form of a *chakravartin*



XXIV.—Descent from the Trayastriṃśas Heaven. No. 1133.

rāja and in this way be the first to welcome her returning Master. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hian who visited India early in the 5th century makes Śaṅkāśya, the

modern Sankisa in the Farrukhabad District, the site of this miracle, and states that the three ladders had disappeared into the earth except seven steps which still remained visible and over which Aśoka had built a *vihāra* (chapel).

XXV.—SUBJUGATION OF THE ELEPHANT, NALAGIRI.

The Judas of the Buddhist story is Devadatta, the wicked cousin of the Buddha. Never able to endure the fame and success of his kinsman, Devadatta is said to have thrice attempted his life, the last time by



XXV.—Subjugation of the elephant. No. 310.

letting loose a furious and intoxicated elephant in the city of Rājagṛiha. Needless to say the attempt failed, and in the relief we see the Buddha calming the fury of the elephant by placing his hand on its forehead as it enters the city gate.

XXVI.—CONQUEST OF THE BLACK SNAKE AT RĀJAGRĪHA.

This relief, a unique specimen, depicts the victory of the Buddha over a dreadful black snake which terrified the people of Rājagṛiha. The story goes that there had lived in that city a wealthy but miserly fellow who having meanly buried his wealth during his lifetime was



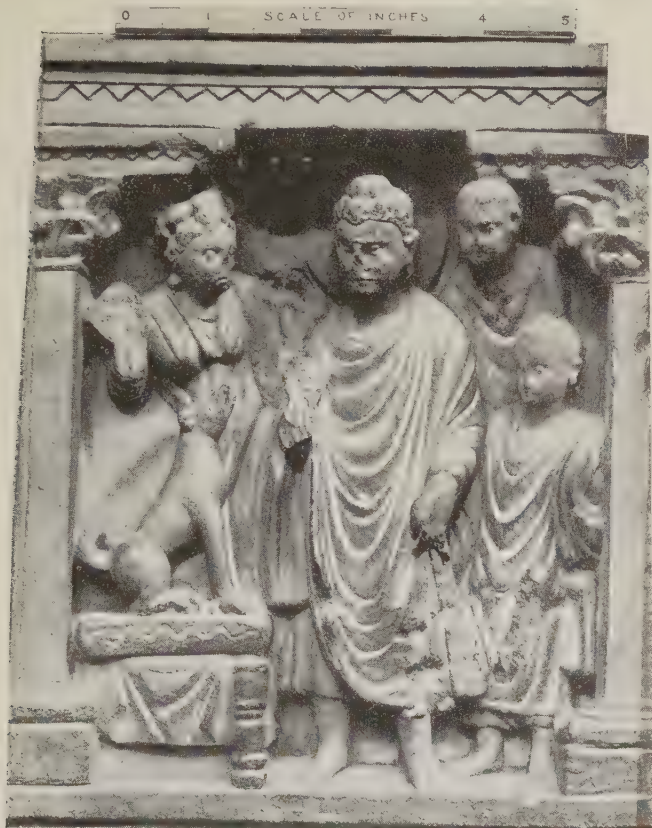
XXVI.—Conquest of the black snake at Rājagṛiha. No. 30.

reborn as a poisonous black snake which guarded the spot and spread terror throughout the town. The king, Bimbisāra had, therefore, recourse to the Buddha who had no difficulty in overcoming it, and here we see it meekly coiled in the Buddha's alms-bowl while the gratified king and his attendants stand by the lotus-decked pond from which the Buddha has charmed the dreaded *nāga*.

XXVII.—THE WHITE DOG WHICH BARKED AT THE BUDDHA.

Once while in the country of Śrāvastī the Buddha went to visit a certain man named Śuka, who was

absent when the Buddha arrived. Now it so happened that Śuka had a white dog, which began to bark furiously at the sight of the Buddha, on which the latter remonstrated, and told him that it was because he had been so rich that he had fallen into that estate. There-



XXVII.—Buddha and the white dog. No. 1139.

upon the dog deeply mortified crept away to a far corner covered with shame. When Śuka returned and found the dog in this abject condition, he asked what had happened, and when he heard the story he imme-

diately set off to see the Buddha and demanded an explanation. But the Buddha suavely informed him that the dog was his own departed father come back to life in this form, and bade him as a test demand of the dog where he had buried his treasure previous to his death. The bewildered Śuka did as he was told, when

to his astonishment the dog crawled under the couch and began to dig. When the place was opened up, the treasure was disclosed to view and the truth of the Buddha's words thus demonstrated.



XXVIII.—HĀRITĪ.

What more delightful object than that presented by this sculpture, a gentle and gracious mother surrounded by her little ones? Alas, that femininity should conceal the most frightful depravity, for this seemingly kindly goddess is in reality the Mother of Demons, the *yakshi* Haritī! Although blessed herself with five hundred sons she used to devour the children of Rajagriha. The Buddha, however, by an ingenious stratagem contrived to awake in this terrible ogress more humane feelings.

XXVIII.—Haritī. No 2100.

He hid under his alms bowl the best loved of her sons and as she wandered distractedly the Blessed One said, "Thou art heart-broken because of one lost son among five hundred; how much more grieved must they be who by thy deeds have lost all their offspring." Thereupon she was immediately converted.

I-tsing tells us that her image was found under the porch or in a corner of the refectory of all the Buddhist monasteries of India and that "she was represented with a child in her arms and three or four around her knees." This mode of representing her disguised so well the horror of her true nature that later she was invoked not only to cure sick children but also to bestow them on the childless. It is very probable that Hārītī was a personification of some infantile epidemic and the counterpart of that Śītala which even to-day receives the worship of Hindu mothers.

XXIX.—THE OFFERING OF THE MONKEY.

Here we find the Buddha seated in the midst of his followers. On the right approaches a monkey carrying



XXIX.—The offering of the monkey. Sikri Stupa, 12.

an alms-bowl, *pātra*, which, according to one text, he has filled with honey. This he presents to the Buddha who is seen holding it in his left hand. Having performed the circumambulation, *pradakṣhiṇā*, of the Buddha the monkey walks joyfully away with his face still turned towards the Master and with most lamentable results, for he falls into a pit and is drowned ! But there is no occasion for sadness for, as a reward for his good deeds, he is immediately reborn as a Brahman named Madhutamma. Hiuan-tsang places this event at Vaiśali and tells us that “ at the north-west angle of the lake there is still a figure of a monkey,” but curiously enough he relates a similar story with reference to a spot near Mathura (Mo-t’u-lo).

XXX.—THE OFFERING OF THE HANDFUL OF DUST.

It was a daily custom of the Buddha, who enjoined the same upon all his monks, to wander abroad at a certain hour in quest of food, for the whole order were dependent for their sustenance upon the voluntary



XXX.—The offering of the handful of dust. No. 2088.

offerings of the pious. Once in the city of Rājagṛiha as the Buddha was going along in this way with his

begging bowl held out before him, he met two little boys playing on the road. One of these suddenly moved to make an offering but having nothing else to offer, reached up to the bowl and dropped into it a generous handful of dust. The Buddha was much touched by this childish act of piety, and some assert that he prophesied that the boy would become a mighty Buddhist monarch in some future life. In this way it is sought to identify the child in this legend with the great Aśoka, which may explain the frequency with which the scene was sculptured. His companion also is said to have been reborn as Rādhagupta, one of the ministers of that famous ruler.

XXXI.—THE VISIT OF INDRA.

Here we find the Buddha seated in meditation in one of those caves which, in India, have ever been the favourite resort of ascetics. The animals which sur-



XXXI.—The visit of Indra. Sikri Stupa, 3.

round the spot indicate not only its remoteness but that peace and serenity which emanating from the

presence of the Buddha change even a jungle into an earthly paradise. But let us turn to the human or, more properly, divine actors. The god Indra wishing to visit the Buddha sends as his forerunner his harpist, the *gandharva* Pañchaśika, who, followed by his master, approaches from the left. The musician with four-stringed harp may appear the more important figure, yet only serves to identify his divine master who with hands clasped in adoration advances towards the cave. The haloed figures in the upper left are the usual *deva* attendants of the Buddha.

XXXII.—THE MAHĀPARINIRVĀṆA OF THE BUDDHA.

We now approach the termination of the Master's long career. The Buddha, eighty years of age, is travelling with his beloved disciple and cousin Ananda,



XXXII.—Mahāparinirvāṇa of the Buddha. No. 916.

when overcome by weakness he reaches with pain and difficulty the little town of Kuśinagara and there passes

away between the twin *sal* tree. Our sculpture is in many ways uncommon, but the principal features of representations of this scene are all present. The identification of the attendant figures presents some difficulty, but Indra to the right and Brahma to the left are quite plain while the fainting figure is Vajrapāṇi. The monk seated with back to the spectator cannot be named with certainty, but the aged monk with long staff who touches the feet of his dead master is undoubtedly Mahākāśyapa. The other princely figures are probably the grief-stricken Malla nobles of Kuśinagara.

XXXIII.—THE COFFIN OF THE BUDDHA.

This relief is of particular interest as it is one of the only two specimens yet found which depict the coffin of the Buddha and it is moreover in absolute agreement



XXXIII.—The Coffin of the Buddha. No. 1111.

with the texts. The funeral arrangements were left to the Mallas of Kuśinagara who observed all those ceremonies said to be fitting for a universal monarch. According to a Tibetan text the body is wrapped in five hundred layers of cotton cloth and then put into an iron case filled with oil and covered with a double cover of iron. It is this receptacle for oil, *taila-droni*, which we see in the relief. The three figures behind the coffin are monks, the curiously dressed personage to the right probably one of the Malla nobles, for we are told that they performed for the Buddha those offices usually relegated to *doms* and men of the lowest castes.

XXXIV.—CREMATION ; DIVISION OF RELICS ; ENSHRINEMENT OF RELICS IN A STŪPA.

Our first panel shows the cremation of the Buddha. By the flaming funeral pyre of odoriferous woods stand two of the Malla chiefs extinguishing the flames by pouring over them "milk" (according to one text) from vessels held at the end of long handles.



XXXIV.—Cremation : Division of relics : Enshrinement of
relics in a stūpa. No. 611

The relics of the Buddha were the object of desire not only on the part of the Mallas but of seven neighbouring

clans, and the determination of the former to retain possession of the ashes seemed likely to result in the most bitter strife. Fortunately a Brahman named Droṇa approached the Mallas and said, "The blessed Gautama was long suffering and greatly praised patience : why then will you slaughter each other over his remains ? I will divide his relics into eight parts and you will give me the vase wherewith I shall have divided them." His proposal being accepted we see him in the second panel distributing the relics to the princely claimants.

The strong desire for portions of the corporeal remains of the Buddha can be better realized when it is remembered that the Buddhist sanctuary *par excellence* was the *stūpa*, a monument enshrining such relics. A representation of a *stūpa* is given in the third panel of the relief, where we see it worshipped by two adoring figures. It was from the remains of such a monument, "the largest in Jambudvīpa," that the Buddha relics were recovered by excavation in March 1909 by Dr. D. B. Spooner close to the city of Peshawar which was at one period the capital city of Gandhāra.

Some idea of the ornamentation of such *stūpas* may be obtained from an examination of the first and most striking object which meets the eye in the archæological gallery of the Lahore Museum, the circular drum of a small *stūpa* obtained by the late Sir Harold Deane in 1889 while excavating the Sikri site, some three miles east-north-east of Jamālgaṛhi in the Peshawar District.

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I have thus endeavoured to trace in brief the evolution of a Buddha from the condition of a lowly, if magnanimous, beast of the field to a pre-eminence of wisdom and virtue, and this endeavour will not have been in vain if I have succeeded in awakening an interest in at least one of the many fascinating features presented by the Græco-Buddhist sculptures in the adjoining galleries of this Museum.

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